

Tennessee Watersheds - MIDDLE

Barren River

The Barren River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Clay, Macon, and Sumner Counties. The Barren River and Watershed are named for the Barrens, the meadowlands that are predominant in the watershed. The Barren River Watershed appears to be in the Cumberland River Basin, but it is not. Water in the watershed flows to the Green River, then to the Ohio River.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:
<http://www.state.tn.us/environment/wpc/watershed/wsmplans/>.

Buffalo River

The Buffalo River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Hickman, Humphreys, Lawrence, Lewis, Perry, and Wayne Counties. The Buffalo River and Watershed are named for the buffalo fish, which were abundant in the Buffalo River when the first settlers arrived.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:
<http://www.state.tn.us/environment/wpc/watershed/wsmplans/>.

Caney Fork River

Located in Middle Tennessee, the Caney Fork River watershed includes parts of Bledsoe, Cannon, Cumberland, DeKalb, Putnam, Sequatchie, Smith, Van Buren, Warren, White, and Wilson Counties.

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Cheatham Lake

The Cheatham Lake Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Cheatham, Davidson, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, and Williamson Counties. Cheatham Lake is an impoundment of the Cumberland River and includes 320 miles of shoreline that extends 67.5 miles up the Cumberland River from Cheatham Dam, through Nashville, to Old Hickory Dam. The Lock and Dam were authorized by Congress in 1946 as a navigation project to enhance the development of the Cumberland River and Cheatham Lake was filled and the lock opened to the public in December 1952. The *Tennessee Blue Book* states that Cheatham County, where the lock and dam are located, was named for Edwin S. Cheatham, Speaker of the Tennessee Senate from 1855 to 1861. However, history holds that Cheatham County was named for the man who settled it, J.R. Cheatham. Cheatham Lake is maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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Collins River

The Collins River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Cannon, Coffee, De Kalb, Grundy, Marion, Sequatchie, Van Buren, and Warren Counties.

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Cordell Hull Lake

The Cordell Hull Lake Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Clay, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Putnam, and Smith Counties. The Cordell Hull Lake Watershed is named in honor of Cordell Hull, a Tennessee Congressman and Secretary of State under President Woodrow Wilson. The Lake was created when the construction of the dam was completed and closed in 1973. Cordell Hull Lake is maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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Guntersville Lake

The Tennessee portion of the Guntersville Lake Watershed is located in southeast Tennessee and includes parts of Franklin, Grundy, and Marion Counties. Guntersville Reservoir is located in northeast Alabama and southeast Tennessee, extending 76 miles up the Tennessee River into Tennessee. The nearby town of Guntersville is named for John Gunter, an early Scottish settler and adopted member of the Cherokee tribe, who established the town the year after the American Revolution. The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) established the stairway of dams and locks that turned the Tennessee into a 652-mile-long river highway. Guntersville Lake construction began in 1935 primarily for flood control and for the production of hydroelectric power.

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Harpeth River

The Harpeth River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Cheatham, Davidson, Dickson, Hickman, Rutherford, and Williamson Counties. The origin of the name "Harpeth" is somewhat obscure. While stories abound about the marauding Harpath Brothers of Kentucky in the 1800's, the name "Harpath" appears on maps as early as the 1780's, thus making the family name an unlikely source of the area name. Information in Tennessee State Archives suggests that a Chinese legend describes Harpath as a man who dwelled in a bountiful valley and that early settlers, reading such legends, may have named their beautiful valley after Harpath (later changed to Harpeth).

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Kentucky Lake (Western TN Valley)

The Kentucky Lake (Tennessee Western Valley) Watershed is located in Tennessee and Kentucky. The Tennessee portion of the watershed (80.7% of the watershed) includes parts of Benton, Carroll, Decatur, Dickson, Henderson, Henry, Houston, Humphreys, and Stewart Counties. Kentucky Lake was created when TVA completed Kentucky Dam in 1944. The dam, located 22 miles upstream of the confluence of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers, is 206 feet high and 8,422 feet long; it's the longest in the TVA system. The Western edge of the watershed defines the Tennessee Western Valley. The watershed has been divided into upstream (Beech River) and downstream drainage areas (Kentucky Lake).

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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Lake Barkley

The Lake Barkley Watershed is located in the northwestern section of Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Cheatham, Dickson, Houston, Montgomery, Robertson, and Stewart Counties. Lake Barkley is the westernmost U.S. Army Corp of Engineers project in a series of dams along the Cumberland River, and is surrounded by 1,004 miles of shoreline. Lake Barkley was named for former Vice-President Alvin Barkley. Land Between the Lakes (US Forest Service) and Fort Donelson National Military Park are on Lake Barkley's western shore.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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Lower Duck River

The Lower Duck River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Dickson, Giles, Hickman, Humphreys, Lawrence, Lewis, Maury, Perry, and Williamson Counties. The Duck River was first settled about 8,000 years ago, but its modern name originated from early surveyors who recognized the abundant waterfowl in the Duck River valley. Much of the watershed, especially in the Yanahli area, was considered prime hunting ground by Cherokee and Chickasaw tribes, as well as by the first settlers. The Duck River flows through some of the most scenic landscapes and least populated counties in Tennessee.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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Lower Elk River

The Lower Elk River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Giles, Lawrence, Marshall, and Maury Counties.

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Lower Tennessee River (Beech River)

The Tennessee Western Valley (Beech River) Watershed is located in Tennessee and Mississippi. The Tennessee portion of the watershed (97.8% of the watershed) includes parts of Benton, Carroll, Chester, Decatur Hardin, Henderson, Humphreys, McNairy, Perry, and Wayne Counties. Kentucky Lake was created when TVA completed Kentucky Dam in 1944. The dam, located 22 miles upstream of the confluence of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers, is 206 feet high and 8,422 feet long; it's the longest in the TVA system. The Western edge of the watershed defines the Tennessee Western Valley (to the west is the Mississippi River Valley). The watershed has been split into the upstream (Beech River) and downstream drainage areas (KY Lake).

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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Obey River

The Tennessee portion of the Obey River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Clay, Cumberland, Fentress, Overton, Pickett, and Putnam Counties. Named for Obediah Terrill, its name has changed from Obed, to Obeds, and then to Obey. The Indian name prior to this naming was Oocooahustehee, meaning good hunting.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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Old Hickory Lake

The Old Hickory Lake Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Davidson, Macon, Robertson, Smith, Sumner, Trousdale, and Wilson Counties. Old Hickory Dam, Lake, and Watershed are named after President Andrew Jackson (nicknamed "Old Hickory"). The lock, dam (completed in 1954), powerhouse, and lake are operated and supervised by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' personnel under the direction of the District Engineer at Nashville.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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Pickwick Lake

Located in Middle Tennessee and Alabama, the Tennessee portion of the Pickwick Lake Watershed includes parts of Hardin, Lawrence, and Wayne Counties. Pickwick Landing was the name of an early settlement in the watershed. Its name was assigned by an early postmaster whose favorite book was The Pickwick Papers by Charles Dickens.

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Red River

The Tennessee portion of the Red River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Cheatham, Davidson, Montgomery, Robertson, Sumner, and Stewart Counties. The Red River is a major stream of north-central Tennessee and south-central Kentucky and is a major tributary of the Cumberland River. The stream's name derives from its typical water color. This is caused by a large load of clay and silt which contains iron oxides.

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Sequatchie River

The Sequatchie River Watershed is located in East Tennessee and includes parts of Bledsoe, Cumberland, Grundy, Marion, Sequatchie, and Van Buren Counties. The Sequatchie River drains the Sequatchie Valley, a large valley in the Cumberland Plateau in eastern Tennessee. The Sequatchie River was named after the Cherokee Chief, Sequachee, who signed a treaty with the colonial government of South Carolina. Sequachee means "opossum, he grins or runs," in Cherokee. The Sequatchie's source is a massive spring which flows out of Devilstep Hollow Cave, a large limestone cavern. It receives the drainage of Grassy Cove, a pastoral limestone region several miles to the north from which the drainage has no surface outlet, but flows through a spectacular series of underground passages.

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South Fork Cumberland River

The Tennessee portion of the South Fork Cumberland River Watershed is located in East Tennessee and includes parts of Anderson, Campbell, Fentress, Morgan, Pickett, and Scott Counties. The South Fork Cumberland River Watershed, also referred to as the Big South Fork Watershed, is named after a prominent river in the watershed. The watershed features a park spanning Tennessee and Kentucky, the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, administered by the National Park Service.

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Stones River

The Stones River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Cannon, Davidson, Rutherford, and Wilson Counties. The battle of Stones River, fought in 1862, was one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War. The watershed contains Percy Priest Lake, which is popular for recreational boating and fishing.

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Upper Cumberland River

The Tennessee portion of the Upper Cumberland River Watershed is located in Middle and East Tennessee and includes parts of Clay and Pickett Counties. In 1748, an Englishman named Dr. Thomas Walker led a party of hunters across the Appalachian Mountains from Virginia. Walker was an explorer and surveyor of renown, and is described as a man of mark among the pioneers. They gave the name "Cumberland" to the lofty range of mountains they crossed, in honor of the Duke of Cumberland, a picturesque region of lakes and mountains in the northern England. Walker's party pursued their journey by way of the Cumberland Gap into what is today Tennessee. Finding a beautiful mountain stream flowing across their course they called it the "Cumberland River." Previous to this time, the Cumberland River had been called Warioto by the natives and Shauvanon by the French traders. The river's upper course flows through the rugged, forested coal-mining region of Southeastern Kentucky and Northeastern Tennessee.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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Upper Duck River

The Upper Duck River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Bedford, Coffee, Franklin, Giles, Lincoln, Marshall, Maury, Moore, Rutherford, and Williamson Counties. The Duck River was first settled about 8,000 years ago, but its modern name originated from early surveyors who recognized the abundant waterfowl in the Duck River valley. Much of the watershed, especially in the Yanahli area, was considered prime hunting ground by Cherokee and Chickasaw tribes, as well as by the first settlers. The Duck River flows through some of the most scenic landscapes and least populated counties in Tennessee.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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Upper Elk River

The Upper Elk River Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and includes parts of Bedford, Coffee, Franklin, Giles, Grundy, Lincoln, Marshall, and Moore Counties.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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Wheeler Lake

The Wheeler Lake Watershed is located in Middle Tennessee and Alabama. The Tennessee portion includes parts of Franklin, Giles, Lawrence, and Lincoln Counties. The lake and dam are named for Joseph "Joe" Wheeler, a former General and congressman from Alabama.

Information about Tennessee's watersheds can be found at:

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